

Reception of the Bishop

*The reception of the Bishop in the back of the Church is only done at the first service of the Episcopal Visit, unless otherwise directed by the Bishop. Prior to the Bishop's arrival to the church, the first Priest and the first Deacon shall vest according to the type of service. If it is a Eucharistic Service, they shall both be fully vested. If it is a non-Eucharistic Service, the Priest shall vest his exorasson, epitachelion, and phelonion, and the Deacon shall vest in his sticharion and orarion. **ALL OTHER CLERGY SHALL NOT VEST, JUST SIMPLY WEAR THE EXORASSON.** When the Bishop arrives to the Church, the first Priest takes the Gospel Book and the first Deacon takes the hand cross. The first Priest proceeds through the Royal Doors followed by the remaining Clergy in order of seniority. When they get to the back of the Church, the first Priest stands in front of the Bishop facing west, while the remaining Clergy stand on either side of the Bishop facing north and south (facing each other), and forming a corridor toward the Altar. The first Deacon comes and stands next to the Bishop on his right side.*

The first Priest begins with the following:

Priest: Have mercy on us, O God, according to thy great mercy, we pray thee, hearken and have mercy.

People: Lord, have mercy (*Thrice*)

Priest: Again, we pray for all pious and Orthodox Christians.

People: Lord, have mercy (*Thrice*)

Priest: Again, we pray for our father and Metropolitan PHILIP and for our father and Bishop MARK and all our brotherhood in Christ.

People: Lord, have mercy (*Thrice*)

Bishop: For thou art a merciful God, who lovest mankind and unto thee we ascribe glory: to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever, and unto ages of ages.

The people respond with "Amen" while the first Priest offers the Gospel Book to the Bishop for veneration, himself kissing the Bishop's right hand. The first Deacon hands the Cross to the Bishop, himself kissing the Bishop's right hand. The clergy process to the solea from Junior to Senior while the people slowly chant repeatedly until the Bishop ascends the Episcopal Throne, "Many years to thee, Master." When the first Priest reaches the solea, he enters the Altar through the Royal Doors, places the Gospel Book on the Antimins, and then

takes his place among the Priests. The Bishop blesses the people from the Solea and then hands the Blessing Cross to the Bishop's Assistant.